

## Message Text

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ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 VO-03 SCA-01

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /048 W

----- 082247

R 240307Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4668

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION UN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, MY

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE BOAT CASES: BOAT NO. CR 1008

1. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE: SUMMARY. EMBOFF INTERVIEWED

27 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES FROM BOAT NO. CR 1008 ON SEPT 20 IN

KUANTAN. THE LEADER OF THE GROUP, QUACH KE HUNG, TOLD AN INCREDIBLE

STORY OF WANDERING FOR MONTHS FROM PORT TO PORT IN MALAYSIA

AND SINGAPORE, AT EACH STOP HAVING THE BOAT REPAIRED AND FORCED

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BACK TO SEA, THE ODYSSEY ENDING ONLY WHEN THE BOAT BURNED UP,

EITHER BY ACCIDENT OR DESIGN ON THE PART OF ITS OCCUPANTS. A HIGH RANKING STATE OFFICIAL CONFIRMED THAT IT IS GOM POLICY TO PUSH OFF ALL REFUGEE BOATS WHICH APPEAR SEAWORTHY. END SUMMARY. END LOU.

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. BOAT NO. CR 1008, WITH 27 PERSONS ABOARD, LEFT BATRI, BEN TRE PROVINCE, ON JUNE 22, 1976. IT ARRIVED OFF KUALTAN ON JUNE 26, WHERE IT WAS MET BY THE GREED SHIP M/V. "CAPTAIN GERONTIS" AND SUPPLIED WITH FOOD. BECAUSE THE BOAT HAD ENGINE TROUBLE, THE GREE SHIP ADVISED IT TO PUT IN TO KUANTAN. A MALAYSIA PATROL BOAT CAME OUT TO MEET NO. CR 1008, TOLD THOSE ABOARD THAT MALAYSIA WAS NOT ACCEPTING REFUGEES, GAVE THEM FOOD, FUEL AND WATER AND SUGGESTED THAT THEY GO ON TO SINGAPORE. ON JUNE 27 THE PATROL BOAT ESCORTED THEM TO INTERNATIONAL WATERS, AND THEY ARRIVED OFF SINGAPORE ON JUNE 30. AGAIN HAVING ENGINE TROUBLE, THE BOAT WAS TOWED INTO SINGAPORE BY A FISHING VESSEL. A SINGAPORE IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL MET THE BOAT AND ONLY ALLOWED THE PASSENGERS TO LAND AFTER ASCERTAINING THAT THERE WAS SERIOUS ENGINE TROUBLE. AFTER SPENDING THREE NIGHTS IN AN IMMIGRATION OFFICE AND PAYING TO HAVE THE BOAT REPAIRED AND REPROVISIONED, THE GROUP RE-EMBARDED ON JULY 3. THEY ARRIVED OUTSIDE KUAANTAN ON JULY 5 BUT WERE NOT ALLOWED TO LAND; THEY PROCEEDED TO KUALA DUNGUN, TRENGGANU, WHERE THEY ANCHORED ON JULY 7. THEY REMAINED AT DUNGUN FOR TWO DAYS, AGAIN REPAIRING THEIR ENGINE, AND WERE TOWED OUT TO SEA BY A MALAYSIAN TUG. THEY ARRIVED OFF KUALA TRENGGANU ON JULY 10, WERE REFUSED PERMISSION TO LAND AND HEADED BACK TO KUANTAN, WHERE, AFTER A BAD STORM, THEY ARRIVED JULY 13. THEY WERE TOWED IN, RESUPPLIED AND AN ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO TOW THEM BACK OUT, BUT THE ENGINE COULD NOT BE REPAIRED. THEY WERE ALLOWED TO STAY FOR EIGHT WEEKS ABOARD ANOTHER LARGE BOAT ANCHORED OFF KUANTAN, WHILE THE MALAYSIAN RED CRESCENT SOCIETY SUPPLIED THEM. ON SEPT 4 THEY WERE SENT OUT TO SEA ON THEIR OLD BOAT BUT ENGINE TROUBLE AGAIN FORCED THEM TO ANCHOR OFFSHORE. AT 2:00 A. M. ON SEPT 6, WHILE ANCHORED IN 3 FEET OF WATER, A FIRE MYSTERIOUSLY BROKE OUT AND DESTROYED A GOOD PART OF THE BOAT. EVERYONE JUMPED OFF AND WALKED TO SHORE, AND THE GROUP HAS SINCE THEN BEEN KEPT IN AN ABANDONED POLICE STATION IN DOWNTOWN KUANTAN. THE GROUP LEADER, QUACH KE HUNG, CLAIMS THAT THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FIRE ON SEPT 6 WAS ACCIDENTAL; HOWEVER, IT EFFECTIVELY ENDED BOAT NO. CR 1008'S ODYSSEY AND IT WOULD NOT BE SURPRISING EVENTUALLY TO DISCOVER THAT THE "ACCIDENT" HAD SOME HUMAN ASSISTANCE. END UNCLASSIFIED.

3. BEGIN LOU. ALTHOUGH THIS GROUP HAS BEEN IN AND OUT OF MALAYSIA SINCE JUNE, NEITHER THE EMBASSY NOR THE UNHCR WAS INFORMED OF THEIR PRESENCE UNTIL AFTER THE LOSS OF THE BOAT.

THEIR EXPERIENCES ARE A STRIKING EXAMPLE OF THE GOM POLICY OF NOT ACCEPTING FURTHER BOAT CASE REFUGEES IF THEIR BOATS APPEAR SEAWORTHY. EMBOFF HAD OPPORTUNITY AFTER INTERVIEWING REFUGEES TO TALK WITH PAHANG STATE SECRETARY DATUK WAN SIDIK, WHO CONFIRMED THAT THIS IS INDEED NOT THE OFFICIAL POLICY. HE HIMSELF POINTED OUT, THOUGH, THAT THE STORY OF BOAT NO. CR 1008 INDICATES THAT IT IS ONLY A TEMPORARY AND SHORT-SIGHTED POLICY AT BEST, AND ULTIMATELY DOES NOTHING TO SOLVE THE BOAT CASES DILEMMA.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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